

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

SECRET

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SUBJECT	1. VOA Listening 2. Other Sources of Information on the West	DATE DISTR.	31 March 1954	
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1. [] VOA can be heard in Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, and some other large cities, but only by those who have good receivers. The simple people, especially the peasants, who cannot afford to buy such receivers, definitely do not hear VOA. They are lucky if they hear the local piped programs or perhaps Moscow. The Voice is jammed very well by specialists and is probably heard only by those sufficiently experienced to devise a means for separating the jamming.
2. Formerly, the people received some news from the West through magazines such as Amerika and the British Soyuznik. Those who purchased these magazines, however, were under suspicion by the MVD and were sometimes taken to MVD headquarters. As a result, people were afraid to purchase these magazines at the kiosks. Then, too, Soviet propaganda went to work and said that the people were not interested in Amerika and that it should be closed down. Further, few could afford Amerika at its original price of ten rubles. It was later reduced to five rubles, which was still too much for the average Soviet citizen. Ogonëk, for example, costs three rubles and Krokodil, 1.25 rubles. Other Western journals which come to the Soviet Union are usually handled only by those in government circles who need to see them in the line of duty.
3. The people in the peripheral areas of the Soviet Union receive information on the West from those who have actually travelled abroad or from soldiers who have been in the West. These latter, for example, report that the people of Soviet-occupied countries live better than do the people of the Soviet Union; they dress and eat better and enjoy life much more. In fact, it is said that the Western Europeans have more holidays than working days. Officials on occupation duty are able not only to save money but to purchase articles which they can sell at a profit on their return.

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